

Proposed Amended Claims
Computerized Valet Parking System

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For Discussion Purposes Only

1. (Amended) A valet parking system, comprising:
a ticket associated with a vehicle being parked having unique electronically readable indicia;
a first data transceiver for inputting and retrieving a first set of vehicle identification data including said electronically readable indicia from said ticket;
a second data transceiver located at a vehicle parking facility remote from said first data transceiver for inputting and retrieving a second set of vehicle identification data;
a central processor including a file memory for storing said first and second sets of vehicle identification data; and
said second data transceiver outputting vehicle pick-up data for retrieval purposes in response to a vehicle retrieval command from said central processor.

8. (Amended) The system of Claim 7, wherein said [first set of vehicle identification data] electronically readable indicia comprises bar code data read by said scanner.

12. (Amended) A method of systematically parking and retrieving a motor vehicle, comprising:

receiving a vehicle to be parked;

associating a ticket having electronically readable indicia with said vehicle;

entering vehicle identification data, and the electronically readable indicia, into a central database;

parking said vehicle;

entering vehicle location data into the central database subsequent to said step of parking said vehicle;

receiving a vehicle retrieve command;

outputting vehicle retrieval data from said vehicle identification and location data [input] previously entered into the central database in response to said step of receiving said vehicle retrieve command; and

retrieving said vehicle in response to said step of outputting said vehicle retrieval data.

13. (Amended) The method of Claim 12, wherein said step of entering vehicle identification data comprises scanning bar code data from [a] the ticket associated with said vehicle into the central database.

17. (Amended) The method of Claim 12, wherein said step of outputting vehicle retrieval data comprises printing said vehicle retrieval data at a key station in proximity to said parked vehicle.

19. (Amended) A valet parking system, comprising:

a handheld data transceiver for inputting [and retrieving] a first set of vehicle identification data from a vehicle being parked;

a second data transceiver located at a vehicle parking facility remote from said first data transceiver for inputting [and retrieving] a second set of vehicle identification data from the vehicle after the vehicle is parked;

a central processor including a file memory for storing said first and second sets of vehicle identification data;

remote retrieval means operative for permitting vehicle retrieval from a site remote from said handheld data transceiver;

a server operatively linking said handheld data transceiver, said second data transceiver, said central processor and said remote retrieval means;

said second data transceiver including a printer for printing vehicle pick-up data for retrieval purposes in response to a vehicle retrieval command being generated by either said handheld data transceiver or said remote retrieval means and sent from said central processor; and

means for generating financial and employee performance evaluation reports based on a third set of data derived from said first and second sets of vehicle identification data.

20. (Amended) In a valet parking system including a vehicle retrieval request station located remotely from a valet parking system staging area, a method of initiating retrieval of a parked motor vehicle, comprising the steps of:

receiving a vehicle retrieval request at the vehicle retrieval request station;

computing a vehicle retrieval time window to determine average vehicle retrieval time for a predetermined time period;

displaying an expected vehicle retrieval time based on the vehicle retrieval time window at the vehicle retrieval request station[; and

displaying a customer assistance message at the vehicle retrieval request station in response to vehicle retrieval delays].

25. (New) The method of Claim 12, wherein said step of receiving a vehicle retrieve command comprises the step of receiving a vehicle retrieve command in response to the electronically readable indicia being re-entered into the central database.

26. (New) A computerized valet parking system, comprising:

a ticket associated a vehicle being parked that has a set of unique electronically readable indicia;

a data transceiver for inputting a first set of vehicle identification data including said electronically readable indicia;

a central processor including a file memory for storing said first set of vehicle identification data;

a vehicle retrieval device located at a site remote from said data transceiver to allow said vehicle to be retrieved from one of a plurality of vehicle retrieval sites; and

a server that operatively links said data transceiver, said central processor and said vehicle retrieval device.

27. (New) The system of Claim 26, wherein said data transceiver comprises a handheld data transceiver located at a vehicle staging area and coupled to said system by said server through a wireless communication link.

28. (New) The system of Claim 27, further comprising means for generating reports based on system operation over a predetermined time period.

29. (New) The system of Claim 28, further comprising means for downloading said reports to a remote database on a periodic basis.

30. (New) The system of Claim 28, wherein said reports comprise system accounting reports.

31. (New) The system of Claim 28, wherein said reports comprise employee evaluation reports.

32. (New) A method for valet parking of vehicles, comprising:

- (a) providing a ticket for a vehicle presented by a customer to a parking attendant for parking, said ticket having electronically readable indicia thereon;
- (b) storing the electronically readable indicia together with vehicle identification information into a computer memory;
- (c) parking the vehicle at a parking location; and
- (d) storing parking location information into the computer memory;
- (e) thereafter, prior to retrieving the vehicle for the customer, electronically reading the indicia and fetching the stored vehicle identification information and the parking location information associated with the indicia from the computer memory.

33. (New) The method of Claim 32, further comprising the steps of:

- (f) providing visually observable data identifying the vehicle and the vehicle parking location based on step (e);
- (g) retrieving the vehicle from its parked location; and
- (h) presenting the vehicle to the customer.

34. (New) The method of Claim 32, wherein step (b) further comprises:

additionally storing the name of the customer, along with customer identifying information, into the computer memory;

thereafter, determining whether the vehicle identification information has previously been entered into the computer memory and, if so, providing visually observable data indicating the name of the customer associated with the vehicle identification information so that the parking attendant can greet an old customer by name.

35. (New) The method of Claim 32, further comprising the steps of:
additionally storing in step (b) parking rate information into the computer memory
regarding an applicable customer service charge; and
additionally providing a visually observable indication in step (f) about the
customer service charge when the vehicle is retrieved.

36. (New) The method of Claim 32, further comprising the steps of:
(i) additionally storing in step (d) employee identification data for identifying a
parking attendant who parked the vehicle;
(j) entering the employee identification data into the computer memory identifying
the parking attendant who retrieved the vehicle; and
(k) generating a management report associated with the data entered in steps (i)
and (j).

37. (New) The method of Claim 36, wherein the management report includes data based on at least one of the following categories:

- (a) parking attendant identification information relating to who parked or retrieved a given vehicle;
- (b) the number of vehicles parked and retrieved by a given parking attendant;
- (c) duration of time worked by a given parking attendant;
- (d) total staging and parking time associated with a particular vehicle and parking attendant; and
- (e) total retrieval time associated with a particular vehicle and parking attendant.

38. The method of Claim 32, further comprising the steps of:

using a handheld transceiver to read the indicia, enter given information associated with the indicia, and wirelessly transmit the indicia and information to the computer memory.

39. The method of Claim 32, further comprising the step of:

transmitting data to a remote transceiver located in an area adjacent to the parked vehicle; and

using the transmitted data to provide the visually observable data in step (f).

40. The method of Claim 32, further comprising the steps of:
providing a remote retrieval station at which the customer may present the ticket;
reading the indicia on the ticket at the remote retrieval station; and
initiating steps (e) and (f) whereby a customer can initiate retrieval of the vehicle
at a location remote from the location where the vehicle is ultimately presented to the customer
by the parking attendant.